

Parenting styles of parents with one to five-year children attending Government Taluk Hospital, Anekal, Karnataka

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Received: November 22, 2019; Accepted: January 29, 2020

ABSTRACT


Background: Parenting is the process of raising and teaching a child from birth to adulthood. There are four types of parenting styles, of which the most common is authoritative parenting. Parenting styles and the quality of a parent-child relationship are considered to have an impact on the psychosocial development of the child. **Objectives:** The objectives of the study were (1) to assess the parenting styles of parents with 1–5-year-old children attending Government Taluk Hospital, Anekal, Karnataka. (2) To assess the association between sociodemographic factors and parenting styles of parents. **Materials and Methods:** This cross-sectional study was conducted among 200 mothers of 1–5-year-old children accessing health care at Government Taluk Hospital, Anekal. Modified parenting styles and dimensions questionnaire was administered to mothers. **Results:** Mean age of the 200 mothers was 26.2 ± 2.4 years and fathers reportedly were 32.1 ± 3.1 years. Most fathers had high school education and were laborers. Majority of mothers had primary education and were homemakers. There was a significant difference in the mean parenting score of fathers (86.2 ± 14.1) and that of mothers (92.1 ± 11.9), where higher scores indicate better parenting styles. Authoritative parenting style was significantly associated with occupation and education of the fathers. Uninvolved parenting was significantly associated with education of the fathers; occupation and younger age (<26 years) of the mothers. **Conclusion:** A limitation of this study was that the mothers responded for themselves as well as on behalf of their husbands. Mothers felt that their husband's parenting style was inadequate. The study identified a need for education of the parents regarding parenting styles.

KEY WORDS: Children; Family; Mental Health; Parenting Styles; Under Five

INTRODUCTION

Parenting is generally done in a child's family by the mother and the father. The association between parenting styles and how children grow and develop is very complex. Parenting style has been well-documented to have a significant impact on developmental process and socialization of children.^[1]

In 1968, Baumrind put forth three kinds of parenting typologies: Authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. Authoritative parenting signifies to a balance of control and nurturance. The authoritarian parent attempts to shape, control, and estimate the attitudes and behaviors with a set standard of conduct. The permissive parent is high in nurturance and support, but low in control. This type of parent allows for excess of autonomy. Maccoby and Martin expanded Baumrind's work into four parenting styles: Authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful. Maccoby and Martin describe authoritative parenting where the parent is demanding and responsive. Finally, with a neglectful parent, there is neither demandingness nor responsiveness. Parenting style influences child development primarily through moderating influence on the

Access this article online	
Website: http://www.ijmsph.com	Quick Response code
DOI: 10.5455/ijmsph.2020.11329201929012020	

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relationship between parenting practices and developmental outcomes.^[2]

Parenting is important for social competence, academic performance, psychosocial performance, and problem behavior.^[3] Considering that parenting styles have significant effect on the holistic health and development of the child, we aimed to assess the parenting styles of parents with 1–5-year-old children and assess the association between sociodemographic factors and parenting styles of parents.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This was a cross-sectional study, conducted at Government Taluk Hospital, Anekal, Bengaluru District, Karnataka, among mothers of 1–5-year-old children who were availing health-care services at this hospital.

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Institution Ethics Committee (232/2018), St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences, Bengaluru. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Administrative Medical Officer, Government Taluk Hospital, Anekal. Informed written consent was obtained from all the mothers who participated in this study.

Sample Size

The sample size was calculated as 196, with 7% absolute precision and 95% confidence limits. Assuming 50% of the mothers have authoritative parenting style, Prevalence was taken as 50. All the mothers of 1–5-year-old children, who come to this hospital for health-care services, were invited to participate in the study, except for those who were seriously ill, single parents, and those from broken families.

Period of Study

This study was conducted during July 2018–August 2018. A total of 200 mothers were interviewed during the study period.

Variables

We analyzed sociodemographic variables (age of parents, mother and father's socioeconomic details, and family details) and health status of the child.

The Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ)

Parenting styles were assessed using the PSDQ. Short version of PSDQ consisting of 21 items with three subheadings of parenting styles, namely, authoritative, authoritarian, and

permissive parenting styles was used. We also found out from literature review that one more type of parenting present is uninvolved parenting style.^[4] Hence, the modified version was used in this study, in that, the author added few more questions regarding uninvolved parenting style and the final questionnaire consisted of 24 items. The scoring for the questionnaire was done in such a way that higher the score, better parenting. The questionnaire was translated into Kannada.

Statistical Analysis

The data collected were entered in Microsoft Excel. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 16. Sociodemographic

Table 1: Sociodemographic profile of the study population ($n=200$)

Variables	<i>n</i> (%)
Fathers age in years	
<32	80 (40.0)
≥32	120 (60.0)
Fathers education	
No education	12 (6.0)
Primary school	45 (22.5)
High school	97 (48.5)
Pre-university course	33 (16.5)
Degree	13 (6.5)
Fathers occupation	
Laborer	73 (36.5)
Farmer	38 (19.0)
Driver	32 (16.0)
Others	57 (28.5)
Mothers age in years	
<26	81 (40.5)
≥26	119 (59.5)
Mothers education	
No education	20 (10.0)
Primary school	113 (56.5)
High school	35 (17.5)
Pre-university course	16 (8.0)
Degree	16 (8.0)
Mothers occupation	
Homemakers	158 (79.0)
Farmer	13 (6.5)
Laborer	15 (7.5)
Others	14 (7.0)
Socioeconomic status*	
Upper	31 (15.5)
Upper middle	87 (43.5)
Middle	73 (36.5)
Lower middle	9 (4.5)
Lower	0 (0.0)

*Modified BG Prasad^[7]

details and health status of the child were described in terms of frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. Chi-square test was used to assess association between parenting styles and various sociodemographic factors. $P < 0.05$ was considered significant.

RESULTS

Mean age of the 200 mothers and fathers interviewed was 26.2 ± 2.4 years and 32.1 ± 3.1 years, respectively. The sociodemographic profile of the population is described in Table 1.

Mean per capita income was 4575 ± 6.39 . In the study, mean age distribution of children was 3.60 ± 1.14 years and 37 (18%) children were going to anganwadi. Nearly half the children, 85 (42.5%) had illness such as fever, upper respiratory tract infection, and diarrhea in the past 6 months. The health profile of children is described in Table 2.

The mean parenting scores are described in Table 3. On measuring the association between sociodemographic factors with the different parenting styles, it was found that authoritative parenting style was significantly associated with education ($P = 0.006$) and occupation ($P = 0.012$) of the father;

authoritarian parenting style was significantly associated with education of the father ($P = 0.007$); permissive parenting style was significantly associated with younger age groups (<32 years) ($P = 0.000$) and occupation ($P = 0.006$) of fathers and younger age groups (<26 years) ($P = 0.000$) and occupation ($P = 0.001$) of the mothers; and uninvolved parenting style was significantly associated with the education ($P = 0.001$) of the father; occupation ($P = 0.002$) and younger age groups (<26 years) ($P = 0.000$) of the mothers, as shown in Table 4.

DISCUSSION

The mean age of the 200 mothers was found to be 26.2 ± 2.4 years and fathers reportedly were 32.1 ± 3.1 years. Most of the fathers had high school education and were laborers by occupation. Majority of mothers had primary education and were homemakers. There was a significant difference in the mean parenting score of fathers (86.2 ± 14.1) and that of mothers (92.1 ± 11.9), where higher scores indicate better parenting styles. Authoritative parenting style was significantly associated with occupation and education of the fathers. Uninvolved parenting was significantly associated with education of the fathers; occupation and younger age (<26 years) of the mothers.

Most fathers belong to the age group of ≥ 32 years. This implies that, in our study, most of the fathers of 1–5-year-old children had adequately matured for parenting role. Most of the mothers in our study belong to ≥ 26 age group. Considering that in rural India, 31.5% of women get married before 18 years of age,^[5] in our study, most mothers of 1–5-year-old children are of sufficient age and maturity for parenting responsibilities. Most (94%) of the fathers were literate. This finding is in line with the National Family Health Survey 4 data, where 81.2% of rural men in Karnataka were literate.^[6] Among the mothers in our study, only 10% had no formal education. In India, 38.5% of rural women are illiterate.^[5] Most (35.5%) of the fathers in our study were manual laborers. This is expected since in rural India, unskilled manual laborer is a common occupation among males. Most (79%) of the mothers in our study were homemakers. In Indian scenario, mothers are usually preferred to be housewives due to hostile work environment, patriarchal family rules, and intense child-rearing responsibilities. This could explain why most mothers are homemakers. Most (43.5%) of the population belongs to upper-middle socioeconomic status, according to Modified BG Prasad classification.^[7,8]

Table 2: Health profile of children ($n=200$)

Variables	Yes n (%)
For past 6 months whether child had any illness	85 (42.5%)
History of diseases ($n=85$)	
Fever	54 (63.5)
URTI	16 (18.8)
Diarrhea	12 (14.2)
Others	3 (3.5)
Present illness ($n=110$)	
Fever	48 (43.6)
URTI	51 (46.4)
Diarrhea	10 (9.1)
Others	1 (0.9)
Purpose of visit to hospital ($n=200$)	
Outpatient department	110 (55)
Immunization	25 (12.5)
Antenatal	65 (32.5)

URTI: Upper respiratory tract infection

Table 3: Mean parenting scores

Variables	Authoritative parenting	Authoritarian parenting	Permissive parenting	Uninvolved parenting
Father’s mean score	31.8 ± 8.5	20.2 ± 6	22.4 ± 3.9	11.84 ± 2.9
	Maximum-45	Maximum-30	Maximum-30	Maximum-15
	Minimum-9	Minimum-9	Minimum-13	Minimum-3
Mother’s mean score	36.3 ± 6.2	19.1 ± 6.5	21.7 ± 4.2	12.1 ± 2
	Maximum-45	Maximum-30	Maximum-30	Maximum-15
	Minimum-22	Minimum-9	Minimum-11	Minimum-6

Table 4: Association of parenting styles with sociodemographic factors (*n*=200)

Type of parenting styles	Scores of parenting styles		P-value
Father's authoritative parenting	Inadequate	Adequate	
Father's characteristics	<33 <i>n</i> (%)	≥33 <i>n</i> (%)	
Fathers education			
No formal education	3 (25)	9 (75)	0.006*
Primary	30 (66.7)	15 (33.3)	
High school	38 (39.2)	59 (60.8)	
Pre-university course	15 (45.5)	18 (54.5)	
Degree	3 (23.1)	10 (76.9)	
Fathers occupation			
Laborer	28 (38.4)	45 (61.6)	0.012*
Farmer	26 (68.4)	12 (31.6)	
Driver	12 (37.5)	20 (62.5)	
Others	23 (40.4)	34 (59.6)	
Mother's uninvolved parenting			
Mother's characteristics	Inadequate	Adequate	
Mother's characteristics	<12 <i>n</i> (%)	≥12 <i>n</i> (%)	
Mothers age in years			
<26	22 (27.2)	59 (72.8)	<0.001*
≥26	67 (56.3)	52 (43.7)	
Mothers occupation			
House wife	70 (44.3)	88 (55.7)	0.002*
Farmer	10 (76.9)	3 (23.1)	
Laborer	1 (6.7)	14 (93.3)	
Others	8 (57.1)	6 (42.9)	
Father's Uninvolved parenting			
Category	Inadequate	Adequate	
Category	<13 <i>n</i> (%)	≥13 <i>n</i> (%)	
Fathers education			
No formal education	8 (66.7)	4 (33.3)	0.001*
Primary	26 (57.8)	19 (42.2)	
High school	49 (50.5)	48 (49.5)	
Pre-university course	6 (18.2)	27 (81.8)	
Degree	9 (69.2)	4 (30.8)	

*Significant *P*-value by Chi-square test

There was a significant difference in the mean parenting score of fathers (86.2 ± 14.1) and that of mothers (92.1 ± 11.9), where higher scores indicate better parenting styles. This study was done among mothers of under five children. Hence, it is possible that the mothers rated their scores better than that of their husbands.^[9] Most fathers adopted authoritarian parenting styles. Maximum score was 30 for the fathers and 35 for the mothers. In that, fathers scored 20.2 and mothers scored 22. This could be due to the prevailing South Asian family customs and patriarchy, which instructs that children need to be disciplined and corporal punishment is considered as a norm.^[8] Authoritative parenting style is considered as the best parenting style.^[4] Maximum score for this parenting style was 45, however, fathers scored 31.8 and mothers scored 36.3. This could be due to less awareness about the skills of parenting,

child as an individual and socioeconomic struggles and poor family support from other relatives. In India, awareness of parenting styles is inadequate. Parents do not know how to parent, guide, and train the children and sometimes, parents get less involved, and grandparents are more involved in bringing up the child.^[8,10] In permissive parenting styles, maximum score was 30. In that, fathers got 22.4 and mothers got 21.7 and the fathers got better score than the mothers. This could be due to the fathers; work pressures get inadequate time to spend with their children and hence tend to spoil them. In uninvolved parenting style, 49% had inadequately involved parenting for fathers and 44.5% for mothers. Indian family system is set in such a way that parents have to take care of their children. However, the complete involvement might be lacking due to interference from other relatives and family issues.^[11] In our study, it was proven that the father's education and occupation were related to different parenting styles. This could be due to the fact that education improves a person holistically, making them concentrate on parenting and occupation related to income might be associated with the time spent with the child and the parenting style. In our study, women aged ≥ 26 have more uninvolved parenting. This could be due to higher parity and more family responsibilities.

The study was done in a single rural hospital and therefore, the results cannot be generalized to the population at large. The study design was cross-sectional. Such an approach can provide a snapshot of parenting styles in the population but will not provide any information on the trajectory of these styles throughout the life course. Another limitation of this study was that mothers responded for themselves as well as on behalf of their husbands. Other limitation is that data were collected by self-reporting, whereas careful observation of the interactions between parents and their children by a third party observer may produce more objective measures of parenting styles. Since it is a self-administered sensitive questionnaire, considering the educational status of mothers, social desirability bias can occur, and it is another limitation of the study.

CONCLUSION

In our study, we found out that authoritative parenting was the most prevalent parenting style among parents. This study also highlights parenting style of fathers in comparison to mothers. Authoritative parenting style was significantly associated with education and occupation of the fathers. Uninvolved parenting style was significantly associated with the education of the father; occupation and younger age groups (<26 years) of the mothers. Mothers felt that their husband's parenting style was inadequate. The study identified a need for education of the parents regarding parenting styles. Parenting awareness and good parenting styles could be taught to the parents at hospitals and anganwadis for the complete growth of the child.

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How to cite this article: Attokaran T, Gnanaselvam NA, Siby C, Joseph PT, John J, Gonsalves J, *et al.* Parenting styles of parents with one to five-year children attending Government Taluk Hospital, Anekal, Karnataka. *Int J Med Sci Public Health* 2020;9(3):219-223.

Source of Support: Nil, **Conflicts of Interest:** None declared.